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SUBJECT: DECEMBER 13 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: SIX-PARTY TALKS,
SOUTH CHINA SEA PROTESTS, JAPANESE PM VISIT, BALI
CONFERENCE, PUTIN

11. Key points at the regular December 18 MFA press briefing:

-- VFM Wu Dawei is currently in Pyongyang to discuss the next phase of the Six Party Talks.

-- Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda has expressed his willingness to visit China, but the two sides have not yet decided a date for the visit.

-- Protests in Vietnam over the South China Sea have hurt Sino-Vietnamese friendship and China hopes that Vietnam will take steps to ensure protests do not happen again.

-- China congratulates the Bali Conference on Climate Change on its success and hopes the developed nations lead the way forward on reducing greenhouse gasses.

-- Rumors that China will sell ten fighter aircraft to Iran are untrue.

-- Vladimir Putin has made great contributions to expanding mutual trust and cooperation between China and Russia and China hopes such cooperation can continue.

-- Visits: Bolivian Foreign Minister David CHOQUEHUANCA Cespedes will visit China December 20-24, at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi.

Six Party Talks Update

12. At the December 18 regular MFA press briefing, spokesman Qin Gang confirmed that VFM Wu Dawei is currently in Pyongyang to discuss the next phase of work for the Six Party Talks. Qin expressed optimism about the progress so far. He noted the consensus reached on goals and said China hopes all parties work together to increase mutual trust and cooperation to implement Six Party Talks agreements comprehensively.

Japanese Prime Minister Visit

13. Asked about press reports that Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda will visit China December 27-30, Qin replied that Fukuda has expressed his willingness to visit either in late 2007 or early 2008. Once the two sides agree on a date, they will announce it.

Protests in Vietnam

¶4. Protests in Vietnam regarding the South China Sea have damaged the Chinese-Vietnamese friendship, and China hopes Vietnam will take appropriate measures to improve Sino-Vietnamese relations and prevent future demonstrations. Qin said China hopes to solve the issue via peaceful consultations, and noted all parties have the responsibility to safeguard regional security.

New Local Government for Disputed Islands

¶5. Asked about the recent establishment of the county-level city of Sansha, a part of Hainan province, to administer the disputed Xisha and Nansha islands, Qin responded that the area involved are indisputably under Chinese sovereignty and establishing local governmental arrangements is a normal activity for sovereign governments to undertake.

Malnutrition in Tibet

¶6. Asked about a recent University of California report that 60 percent of children in Tibet are malnourished and that Tibet's infant mortality rate is considerably higher than elsewhere in China, Qin responded that he has for the past three press conferences addressed the Dalai Lama's lies and did not wish to continue addressing them. He added that "serfdom in Tibet died long ago."

The Bali Climate Change Discussion

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¶7. China congratulates the participants in the Bali discussions on climate change on the success of the meeting, which concluded with consensus on the direction for future negotiations. China hopes developing nations take the lead in reducing greenhouse gasses and help developing nations through increased technological assistance.

Japanese Missile Tests

¶8. Asked about recent Japanese tests of a ballistic missile defense system, Qin responded that Japan has always stated its desire for peaceful development. China hopes that Japan's actions will be conducive to peace, security and mutual trust in the region. He said China has a policy of benevolence toward its neighbors and hopes countries in the region can work together for peace, security and development. He also said China opposes any other nation's interference in the Taiwan issue.

Sale of "Fighters" to Iran

¶9. Asked about reports that China will sell Iran ten fighter aircraft, Qin responded emphatically that he had already responded to the question on October 25, and that the reports are groundless and incorrect. China is responsible and prudent in the area of nonproliferation, in accord with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Putin's Contributions to Sino-Russian Relations

¶10. Asked about the possibility that Vladimir Putin will become Russia's next Prime Minister, Qin noted that under Putin's lead, the Sino-Russian partnership has been greatly strengthened, with mutual trust reaching an unprecedented high. China values the contributions of Putin to these developments.

Visits: Bolivian Foreign Minister

¶11. Bolivian Foreign Minister David CHOQUEHUANCA Cespedes will visit China December 20-24, at the invitation of Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi.

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